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May 23, 2011

Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: In the Matter of applications of AT&T Inc. and Deutsche Telekom AG for consent to assign or Transfer Control of licenses and Authorizations; (WT Proceeding - No. 11-65).

Dear Commissioners:

Farmers and ranchers in South Dakota don't often have access to technologies that people in cities may take for granted. We are an independent people, and we are used to making do with what we have. But when new technologies can make our work easier, more productive and even safer, we want to take advantage of them.

One such technology is high-speed wireless Internet service. We understand that the AT&T/T-Mobile merger will mean that the next generation of this service will reach more parts of South Dakota. We are fully supportive of it and hope that you are, too. This technology can truly impact the lives of farmers and ranchers. As it is, it can be difficult to get even wired broadband service to remote farmhouses, offices and other structures. Wired service doesn't provide what farmers and ranchers need, because often they are not in an office or house. Their job is out on the land.

High-speed wireless service will allow them to use the many applications on smartphones or laptops to stay connected and manage their business. They can remotely monitor conditions of fields or pastures without being there or control valves and gates. With the next generation of wireless, they can even use video to supplement travel to various parts of their ranches or farms. These advances will also help keep more of our young people in farming and ranching and in rural areas. They can work remotely from many jobs. Their children can get well-rounded educations by using distance learning to supplement local classes.

We see many benefits to South Dakota's farmers and ranchers of the new technology that will come from this merger, so we urge you to give it your support.

Sincerely,

Doug Sombke
President, SD Farmers Union

John Kerstiens
Director of Government Relations, SD Farmers Union

CC:
Chairman Julius Genachowski Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael Copps Commissioner Robert McDowell

"Uniting Farmers, Ranchers and Rural Communities for a Stronger South Dakota"